

AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior listings of claims in the application.

Listing Of Claims:

Claim 1. (**currently amended**): A system for accepting money items or the like, the system comprising:

a network; and

a plurality of first, second and third acceptors in communication with one another via the network,

each acceptor comprising

a memory configured to store a normal acceptance window comprising a lower safety margin, a central high probability region and an upper safety margin and a restricted acceptance window comprising the central high probability region,

sensing means for sensing parameters of an item submitted to the acceptor,

processing means for determining acceptability of the item submitted to the acceptor in the basis of an acceptance criteria using the parameters thereof sensed by the sensing means, and

communication means, associated with the processing means, for sending alarm signals from the acceptor and receiving alarm signals from other acceptors, via the network,

wherein the processing means is configured to respond to a condition indicative of a fraud attempt by sending an alarm signal to a plurality of other acceptors using said communication means and

wherein the processing means is configured to utilize the normal acceptance window as the acceptance criteria until ~~respond to~~ an alarm signal[,] is received by said communication means via the network, and thereafter to modify the acceptance criteria to a restricted acceptance window, which excludes the lower and upper safety margins of the normal acceptance window.

Claim 2. (previously presented): A system according to claim 1, wherein said condition relates to at least one of the sensed parameters.

Claim 3. (previously presented): A system according to claim 2, wherein said condition comprises at least one of the sensed parameters falling within a marginal region of an acceptance range therefor.

Claim 4. (previously presented): A system according to claim 1, wherein said modification comprises reducing an acceptance range for at least one of the sensed parameters.

Claim 5. (previously presented): A system according to claim 4, wherein said condition relates to at least one of the sensed parameters.

Claim 6. (previously presented): A system according to claim 5, wherein said condition comprises at least one of the sensed parameters falling within a marginal region of an acceptance range therefor.

Claim 7. (previously presented): A system according to claim 1, wherein the communication means comprises data network communication means.

Claim 8. (currently amended): A system for accepting money items or the like, the system comprising:

a network; and

a plurality of first, second and third acceptors in communication with one another via the network,

each acceptor comprising

a memory configured to store a normal acceptance window comprising a lower safety margin, a central high probability region and an upper safety margin and a restricted acceptance window comprising the central high probability region,

sensing means for sensing parameters of an item submitted to the acceptor,

processing means for determining acceptability of the item submitted to the acceptor in the basis of an acceptance criteria using the parameters thereof sensed by the sensing means, and

data network communication means, associated with the processing means, for sending alarm signals from the acceptor and receiving alarm signals from other acceptors, via the network,

wherein the processing means is configured to respond to a condition indicative of a fraud attempt by sending an alarm signal to a plurality of other acceptors using said communication means and

wherein the processing means is configured to utilize the normal acceptance window as the acceptance criteria until ~~respond to~~ an alarm signal[[,]] is received by said communication means via the network, and thereafter to modify the acceptance criteria to a restricted acceptance window, which excludes the lower and upper safety margins of the normal acceptance window.

Claim 9. (previously presented): A system according to claim 8, wherein said condition relates to at least one of the sensed parameters.

Claim 10. (previously presented): A system according to claim 9, wherein said condition comprises at least one of the sensed parameters falling within a marginal region of an acceptance range therefor.

Claim 11. (previously presented): A system according to claim 8, wherein said modification comprises reducing an acceptance range for at least one of the sensed parameters.

Claim 12. (previously presented): A system according to claim 11, wherein said condition relates to at least one of the sensed parameters.

Claim 13. (previously presented): A system according to claim 12, wherein said condition comprises at least one of the sensed parameters falling within a marginal region of an acceptance range therefor.

Claim 14. (currently amended): A coin- or banknote-operated system comprising:

a network; and

a plurality of first, second and third acceptors in communication with one another via the network,

each acceptor comprising:

a memory configured to store a normal acceptance window comprising a lower safety margin, a central high probability region and an upper safety margin and a restricted acceptance window comprising the central high probability region,

sensing means for sensing parameters of an item submitted to the acceptor,

processing means for determining acceptability of the item submitted to the acceptor in the basis of an acceptance criteria using the parameters thereof sensed by the sensing means, and

communication means, associated with the processing means, for sending alarm signals from the acceptor and receiving alarm signals from other acceptors, via the network,

wherein the processing means is configured to respond to a condition indicative of a fraud attempt by sending an alarm signal to a plurality of other acceptors using said communication means and

wherein the processing means is configured to utilize the normal acceptance window as the acceptance criteria until ~~respond to~~ an alarm signal[[,]] is received by said communication means via the network, and thereafter to modify the acceptance criteria to a restricted acceptance window, which excludes the lower and upper safety margins of the normal acceptance window.

Claim 15. (previously presented): A system according to claim 14, wherein said condition relates to at least one of the sensed parameters.

Claim 16. (previously presented): A system according to claim 15, wherein said condition comprises at least one of the sensed parameters falling within a marginal region of an acceptance range therefor.

Claim 17. (previously presented): A system according to claim 14, wherein said modification comprises reducing an acceptance range for at least one of the sensed parameters.

Claim 18. (previously presented): A system according to claim 17, wherein said condition relates to at least one of the sensed parameters.

Claim 19. (previously presented): A system according to claim 18, wherein said condition comprises at least one of the sensed parameters falling within a marginal region of an acceptance range therefor.

Claim 20. (previously presented): A system according to claim 14, wherein the communication means comprises data network communication means.

Claim 21. (currently amended): A coin- or banknote-operated system comprising:

a network; and

a plurality of first, second and third acceptors in communication with one another via the network, each acceptor comprising:

a memory configured to store a normal acceptance window comprising a lower safety margin, a central high probability region and an upper safety margin and a restricted acceptance window comprising the central high probability region,

sensing means for sensing parameters of an item submitted to the acceptor,

processing means for determining acceptability of the item submitted to the acceptor in the basis of an acceptance criteria using the parameters thereof sensed by the sensing means, and

data network communication means, associated with the processing means, for sending alarm signals from the acceptor and receiving alarm signals from other acceptors, via the network,

wherein the processing means is configured to respond to a condition indicative of a fraud attempt by sending an alarm signal to a plurality of other acceptors using said communication means and

wherein the processing means is configured utilize the normal acceptance window as the acceptance criteria until respond to an alarm signal[[.]] is received by said communication means via the network, and thereafter to modify the acceptance criteria to a restricted acceptance window, which excludes the lower and upper safety margins of the normal acceptance window.

Claim 22. (previously presented): A system according to claim 21, wherein said condition relates to at least one of the sensed parameters.

Claim 23. (previously presented): A system according to claim 22, wherein said condition comprises at least one of the sensed parameters falling within a marginal region of an acceptance range therefor.

Claim 24. (previously presented): A system according to claim 21, wherein said modification comprises reducing an acceptance range for at least one of the sensed parameters.

Claim 25. (previously presented): A system according to claim 24, wherein said condition relates to at least one of the sensed parameters.

Claim 26. (previously presented): A system according to claim 25, wherein said condition comprises at least one of the sensed parameters falling within a marginal region of an acceptance range therefor.

Claim 27. (currently amended): A system comprising:
a network; and
a plurality of first, second and third coin- or banknote-operated machines in communication with one another via the network, each machine comprising an acceptor, said acceptors each comprising:

a memory configured to store a normal acceptance window comprising a lower safety margin, a central high probability region and an upper safety margin and a restricted acceptance window comprising the central high probability region.

sensing means for sensing parameters of an item submitted to the acceptor,
processing means for determining acceptability of the item submitted to the acceptor in the basis of an acceptance criteria using the parameters thereof sensed by the sensing means, and

data network communication means for communication via said data network associated with the processing means, and for sending alarm signals from the acceptor and receiving alarm signals from other acceptors,

wherein said processing means is configured to respond to a condition indicative of a fraud attempt by sending an alarm signal to a plurality of other acceptors using said communication means and

wherein the processing means is configured to utilize the normal acceptance window as the acceptance criteria until ~~respond to~~ an alarm signal[[,]] is received by said communication means via the network, and thereafter to modify the acceptance criteria to a restricted acceptance window, which excludes the lower and upper safety margins of the normal acceptance window.

Claim 28. (previously presented): A system according to claim 27, wherein said condition relates to at least one of the sensed parameters.

Claim 29. (previously presented): A system according to claim 28, wherein said condition comprises at least one of the sensed parameters falling within a marginal region of an acceptance range therefor.

Claim 30. (previously presented): A system according to claim 27, wherein said modification comprises reducing an acceptance range for at least one of the sensed parameters.

Claim 31. (previously presented): A system according to claim 30, wherein said condition relates to at least one of the sensed parameters.

Claim 32. (previously presented): A system according to claim 31, wherein said condition comprises at least one of the sensed parameters falling within a marginal region of an acceptance range therefor.

Claim 33. (new): A method of limiting fraud in connection with a plurality of networked coin or note operated machines, the method comprising:

sensing parameters of an item submitted to one of the networked coin or note operated machines;

determining acceptability of the item submitted by evaluating the sensed parameters based on an acceptance criteria that represents a distribution of sensed parameters for genuine coins or notes of a particular denomination; and

transmitting an alarm signal among the networked coin or note operated machines in response to a condition indicative of a fraud attempt,

wherein in the determining step the acceptance criteria is a normal acceptance window having a high probability region where there is a relatively high probability of occurrence of a true value and lower and upper safety margins where there is a relatively

low probability of occurrence of a true value unless an alarm signal has been transmitted among the networked coin or note operated machines, and thereafter the acceptance criteria is a restricted acceptance window which excludes the lower and upper safety margins of the normal acceptance window, and

wherein the condition indicative of a fraud attempt comprises an occurrence of one of the sensed parameters within one of the lower safety margins and the upper safety margins.